THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): (a) Government have formally asked the Government of Pakistan for the return to India of the hijackers who hijacked an Indian Airlines Airbus to Lahore on July 5, 1984.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) India and Pakistan are parties to these three Conventions and Pakistan has an obligation either to extradite or punish the offenders.

(d) A formal reply from the Pakistan Government to India's request for the return of the hijackers is still awaited. However, the Pakistan President is reported to have told Indian journalists on July 9 that, as there is no extradition treaty between the two countries, the hijackers could not be sent back to India.

Salem Steel Plant

*178. SHRI T. THANGABALU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present position regarding commissioning of the Salem Steel Plant;

(b) by when it is likely to be commissioned as a full-fledged integrated steel plant;

(c) what are the reasons for the delay in completing the project;

(d) what are the details of the original schedule and project estimate and the cost escalation, present programme and estimates; and

(e) what is the amount to be allocated during the Seventh Five Year Plan for this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI N. K. P. SALVE): (a) The first phase of the project comprising a cold rolling mill complex as approved by Government in May, 1977 was completed and the commissioning of the various units commenced on schedule in phases on September 13, 1981.

(b) Though the rated capacity of the present plant is 32,000 tonnes/year cold rolled and finished stainless steel sheets and strips, the off-take in 1983-84 was only 7,928 tonnes and demand is still sluggish leading to heavy losses.

(c) The second phase which envisages expansion to 2,20,000 tonnes/year of cold rolled stainless steel; hot rolled stainless steel; cold rolled electrical steel; hot rolled special steels and hot rolled mild steel will be undertaken as soon as production from the existing cold rolling mill complex has been stabilised, the market for its production has improved and the viability of its expansion (including the technology that is most cost effective) as well as its time phasing satisfactorily established.

(d) The driginal schedule was 54 months from the date of Government approval: Government approval was accorded on May 25, 1977 and the plant was completed in September, 1981 on schedule. The cost of the project as approved by Government was Rs. 126.81 crores based on 1974 prices suitably adjusted for exchange rate and cost escalations upto March, 1976. The final cost that was incurred was Rs. 181.2 crores and this was approved by Government in November, 1982.

(e) The Seventh Five Year Plan is being formulated and so it is not possible to indicate what provision will be made for the second phase of the Salem Steel Plant

Resumption of talks to solve the Mizo problem

*179. SHRIMATI MONIKA DAS: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shri Laldenga, President of the outlawed Mizo National Front has accepted the Prime Minister's offer for resumption of talks to solve the Mizo Problem; and